Patients’ perspectives on antenatal group consultations
Identifying communicative strengths and weaknesses
Antoinette Fage-Butler & Matilde Nisbeth Jensen, Aarhus University, Denmark

Abstract
- The doctor-patient dyad: main paradigmatic relationship in health communication
- With new technologies, other constellations are enabled, such as patient-patient communication in group consultations
- This poster investigates pregnant women’s perceptions of group consultations in order to identify its communicative strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of patients

Research question
What are pregnant women’s perceptions of the value of group consultations?

Method
- 8 Semi-structured interviews
- 6 Observations
- 8 Semi-structured interviews

Conclusions
- Interviewees were overwhelmingly positive, particularly with regard to the opportunities for:
  - learning
  - normalizing the pregnancy experience
  - emotional support
- Our study indicates the value of this communicative format in antenatal care for pregnant women, suggesting that it could be adopted in antenatal healthcare provision in other countries.
- However, to maximize the benefits of group consultations, healthcare practitioners should be trained in how to manage them.
- More studies are needed to investigate the value of group consultations for other patient groups.

Background
Group consultations are increasingly being integrated as a format of communication in healthcare settings. They have been associated with:
- economic benefits for healthcare institutions (Weinger, 2003)
- greater time and efficiency for healthcare professionals and patients (McDonald et al., 2014)
- improved health outcomes for patients (e.g. Ickovics et al., 2007; Trotter, 2013; Weinger, 2003)

Setting
In Denmark, group consultations have been available as an alternative to individual midwife consultations in Aarhus since 2014.

However, little is known about how pregnant women in the Danish context perceive the benefits and disadvantages of group consultations. Our qualitative study intends to make inroads into that gap.

Contact
Antoinette Fage-Butler
Associate Professor
E: fage-butler@bcom.au.dk
Department of Business Communication
School of Business and Social Sciences
Aarhus University

Matilde Nisbeth Jensen
Assistant Professor
E: matnj@bcom.au.dk

Results

**Strengths**
- **NEW LEARNING AVENUES**
  - "She [another pregnant woman] asked [...], and I didn’t even know it was possible."

**Weaknesses**
- **LACK OF HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION**
  - "I wanted to recommend the exercise to her [...], but the midwife kept talking and I couldn’t give my suggestion."

**Weaknesses**
- **IRRELEVANT INFORMATION SHARED**
  - "There were some questions asked that I didn’t think were relevant, for example by the one who was having her second child."

**Weaknesses**
- **SHARING WITH STRANGERS**
  - "It didn’t matter that it was strangers. It can also be a relief for some that you don’t know them and you can say what you want."

**Weaknesses**
- **EMOTIONAL SUPPORT**
  - "When you hear that others have had the same thoughts as you, and that it is normal to worry about [x], then it is a bit easier to handle."

**Weaknesses**
- **ATMOSPHERE**
  - "It was nice that there was plenty of time to talk about how you were doing [...], and there was a cozy, friendly atmosphere."

**Weaknesses**
- **SHARING WITH STRANGERS**
  - "The thing about the sexually transmitted disease, I didn’t think that had anything to do with her."

**Weaknesses**
- **SHARING EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**
  - "It was also nice to get advice from those who were not midwives. They were able to talk about how it was."

**Weaknesses**
- **LACK OF HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION**
  - "I wanted to recommend the exercise to her [...], but the midwife kept talking and I couldn’t give my suggestion."

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Literature